

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

SENATE BILL 210

By: Senator K. Hammer

By: Representative Underwood

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE REQUIRE EXAMINING OF
AUTHORITATIVE DOCUMENTS ACT; TO AMEND THE LAW
CONCERNING INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS; TO
REQUIRE THE SIGNER TO READ THE BALLOT TITLE OF THE
PETITION IN THE PRESENCE OF A CANVASSER; TO DECLARE
AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE THE SIGNER TO READ THE BALLOT
TITLE OF THE PETITION IN THE PRESENCE OF
A CANVASSER; AND TO DECLARE AN
EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Require Examining of
Authoritative Documents Act".

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 7-9-103(a)(1)(A), concerning the signing of
initiative and referendum petitions, is amended to read as follows:

(a)(1)(A) A After reading the ballot title of the petition in the
presence of the canvasser or having the ballot title of the petition read
aloud to him or her in the presence of the canvasser, a person who is a
registered voter of this state may sign his or her own name and print his or
her own name, address, birth date, and the date of signing on an initiative
or referendum petition in his or her own proper handwriting, and not



otherwise, to order an initiative or referendum vote upon a proposed amendment or a proposed or referred act.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 7-9-103(c), concerning misdemeanor offenses for a person acting as a canvasser, notary, sponsor, or agent of a sponsor, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

(10) As a canvasser, knowingly accepts a signature when the person signing the petition has not read the ballot title of the petition in the presence of the canvasser or the ballot title of the petition has not been read aloud to the person in the presence of the canvasser.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 7-9-109(a) is amended to read as follows:

(a) Each petition containing signatures shall be verified in substantially the following form by the canvasser's affidavit thereon as a part thereof: "State of Arkansas

County of _____

I, (print name of canvasser), being duly sworn, state that each of the foregoing persons signed his or her own name to this sheet of the petition in my presence. To the best of my knowledge and belief, each signature is genuine and each signer is a registered voter of the State of Arkansas, _____ County, or City or Incorporated Town of _____. At all times during the circulation of this signature sheet, an exact copy of the popular name, ballot title, and text was attached to the signature sheet, and each signer read the ballot title of the petition or had the ballot title of the petition read to the signer in my presence. My current residence address is correctly stated below.

Signature _____

Current residence _____

Indicate one: _____ Paid Canvasser _____

Volunteer/Unpaid Canvasser

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 20_____

Signature _____

Clerk, Notary, Judge, or J.P.

Seal _____".

SECTION 5. DO NOT CODIFY. SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this act are declared to be severable and the invalidity of any provision of this act shall not affect other provisions of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision.

SECTION 6. DO NOT CODIFY. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the process for citizens to propose initiated acts and amendments to the Arkansas Constitution is critical to a well-functioning democracy in this state; that it is of the utmost importance that the integrity of the initiative process be strengthened through this act so that petitioners and voters maintain a high degree of confidence in the soundness of their right to legislate as citizens of Arkansas; and that this act is immediately necessary because any delay in the implementation of this act would disrupt the initiative process for the 2026 general election, which would have a detrimental effect on the public peace, health, and safety of Arkansas. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

- (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;
- (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or
- (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.